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ABSTRACT

Designed to make the study of Dickens' "Great Expectations" an appealing and worthwhile experience, this paper presents a unit of study intended to help students gain (1) an appreciation of Dickens' skill at creating realistic human characters; (2) an insight into the problems of a young man confused by false values and unreal ambitions and ways to apply this insight to their own worlds; (3) an understanding of the social and historical background of 19th century England and its relation to the novel; and (4) an enjoyment of a well-constructed plot and the mystery and surprise it involves. The unit includes objectives, lecture material, handouts, discussion questions, tests, long term project ideas, and a bibliography of readings. (FL)

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Great Expectations for Great Expectations

A teacher enthusiastically announces to the class, "For your book report requirement this six weeks, you are all going to read Great Expectations by Charles Dickens."

"That sounds BORING! Why can't we choose our own book to read?" moans one student.

"Yea! Everytime a teacher says we have to read something it turns out to be a book the teacher likes and never anything we are interested in," chimes in another.

Does this scenario sound familiar? Having heard responses like this myself, I decided to do some research and put together a unit of study to make Great Expectations an appealing and worthwhile reading experience. What follows are the objectives one should have in mind while teaching the novel, along with lecture material, handouts, discussion questions, tests, theme and long term project ideas, and a bibliography of readings that might be useful to the beginning teacher of Great Expectations.

Most critics consider Charles Dickens the Shakespeare of his day. His talent for creating stories at a rapid pace matured as time went on. Samuel Chew and Richard Altick stated that Dickens's style was "brought into order and beauty in Great Expectations" (1350). The events are realistic and the characters are "believable without being over done" (Chew 1350). Unless students know a book to be Science Fiction, they want characters to be like every day, ordinary people, or more often, like themselves. They can certainly see people they

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know in Pip who is confused and mislead by the false values he pursues. It is easy to develop sympathy for him as he tells us of his ups and downs. There is also a balance of good and bad characters to complement each other in the story.

In addition to the characters, Dickens developed a fascinating, interwoven plot line which involves mystery and surprise. This plot line combined with humor and lively dialogue makes a "spirited study of life, of truth and falsity, of humanity, and of man's struggle" (Granata 527). All of these elements are what students want to read in what they call "good books." Guided reading can help them understand and appreciate these qualities in Dickens's work.

Besides reading Great Expectations just because it is a good story, students should gain some insight into nineteenth century England. During Dickens's life, England was adjusting to the growth and changes of the Industrial Revolution. The welfare and education of children were subjects that interested Dickens, as well as the stratification of social classes. Although Dickens was not a historian, his writing presents a clear picture of the conditions and tensions of the time (Life in the Times of Charles Dickens, T.G.). Because Great Expectations could be considered semi-autobiographical, the student can learn a great deal about Charles Dickens and Victorian England. A brief background of Dickens's life and England during his time should be given in the form of a lecture before beginning to read the novel. It can then be pointed out during the reading of the text how he illustrates life at that time and how Pip's adventures may parallel Dickens's own life.

The goals, then, for teaching Great Expectations are to help students gain:

1. appreciation of Dickens's skill at creating realistic human characters.
2. insight into the problems of a youth confused by false values and unreal ambitions and apply these problems to their own world.
3. understanding of the social and historical background of nineteenth century England and relation to the story.
4. enjoyment of a well constructed plot and the mystery and surprise involved.

I believe these goals should be presented to the students so they know why they are reading the story and what they should be expected to gain from it.

Rather than drag the reading out, a concentrated unit of study over a three week period helps to hold the students' interest. Ample reading time in class should be provided each day. Writing assignments concerning theme or character should be given weekly. Since there are literally hundreds of words in the novel students may not be familiar with, it seems to lend itself to vocabulary study. A long-term project of a nature that could be displayed to students and teachers should be required.

The ideas for this unit are a combination of my own original ideas and already published ideas of others. A list of sources studied is included in a bibliography of the unit.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NOVEL

Two filmstrips which might be good for introducing Victorian England and Charles Dickens are:

Novelists and Their Times, Part 1. Mt. Kisco, New York: Teaching Resources Films, 1976. 76 fr., 16 min.

Great Novels and Their Authors, Group 2, Part 1. Society for Visual Education, 1967. 47 fr., 17 min.

In the event these filmstrips or a similar kind are not available, the following information should be given in the form of a lecture from which students should take notes.

Charles Dickens was born in 1812 not far from London. He was happy during his early childhood. He lived in an area from which he could go on business ventures with his father enjoying sights many young children of his day never were able to see. He was even able to attend the theatre occasionally. His family owned copies of a few books he read over and over again. Robinson Crusoe and Don Quixote were two of his favorites. Some of his most treasured memories of this time in his life came from his hours spent in a private school run by a master who realized Charles was a gifted young boy.

When he was eleven, his happy childhood began to change. Charles's father earned an ample amount of money to support his family, but he obviously was a poor money manager.

In this time free education as we know it today was unheard of. Parents had to pay a substantial fee for their children to attend school. Charles learned that his parents no longer had the money to send him to school; in addition, he had to take a job in a blacking factory pasting labels on bottles of shoe polish. The work itself was not that difficult, but the factory was dark, rat-infested, and the people he worked with did not "appreciate the speech and manners of a comparatively refined and partly educated son of a civil servant" (Burton 12). A few days after Charles went to work, his father was arrested and sent to a debtors' prison. A debtor in those days was sent to prison to keep him from increasing his debts and to protect him from his creditors. John Dickens's family lived with him and their maid was even able to come to their living quarters daily to look after the children and help Mrs. Dickens with daily chores. John still received his weekly salary, but he made no effort to pay off the debts or to release Charles from his miserable position. When John's mother died, she left him enought money to pay off his debts, and the family was released from prison. Soon afterward Charles was able to quit his job because of a quarrel between his employer and father. His mother begged his father to mend the quarrel so Charles could return to work. His father refused, but Charles never forgave his mother for her suggestion. This whole episode left Charles bitter and most biographers say it affected the direction of his life including his writing even though he kept it hidden inside so that his wife and children knew nothing of it until forty years later when it was discovered in some autobiographical notes.

Following his release from the blacking factory, he returned to school for a short time and then went to work as a law clerk. He worked there for nearly two years and then newspapers began inviting him to join their staffs mainly to report on the proceedings of Parliament. He gained a reputation for being the fastest and most accurate reporter of his day. When Parliament was not in session, he traveled all over the country reporting on many different kinds of events - political and social. His writing was not only accurate and current, but it was interesting. He rapidly became well known.

It was during this time that he experienced a heart-breaking love affair which had an important effect on his life and writings. He fell in love with Maria Beadnell whose family was above Dickens's in the social scale. Because of this her family could never accept Charles and the affair ended. Because he had seen what life was like in this upper class, he acquired an "awe of society" which remained with him all his life (Burton 20). More than likely it helped him to aspire to pull himself up in social rank which he obviously did. This affair affected his writing in that it was not until late in his career that he was able to write a story with a sincere love affair. Dickens did finally marry and had several children before the couple spearated twenty-two years later.

In 1833 Dickens's career as a novelist began. He wrote a "sketch" for a new publication called The Monthly Magazine. The sketch was titled "A Dinner in Poplar Walk." When the

sketch was successfully published, he wrote other sketches of London life and began to place them in other magazines and journals. He wrote under the pseudonym "Boz." He met an influential publisher of the day named Macrone who offered to combine the sketches into a book. In 1836 Sketches by Boz was published. Dickens literary career was uphill from that point. Dickens wrote fifteen novels and several short stories during his lifetime.

Great Expectations was begun in 1860 for publication in serial installments to help boost the sales of a failing journal. Readers found the mystery surrounding Pip and his companions quite intriguing and would discuss the possibilities of what might happen next as they eagerly awaited the next issue of the magazine. Much as soap opera fans of today enjoy the interwoven plot and complicity of characters, so did the readers of Dickens's latest story.

Great Expectations was written relatively late in Dickens's career and has remained one of his most popular novels. It is the story of a young boy who is dissatisfied with his position as a blacksmith's apprentice. As was typical of children in nineteenth century England, he had little hope of getting an education and escaping a life of strenuous, poorly paid labor. Mysteriously, however, he is presented with the money to go to London and become a "gentleman." Interwoven in to this story is his love for Estella, the ward of eccentric old Miss Havisham. Through his endeavor to be a gentleman and win Estella's love, Pip learns a great deal about himself and his fellow man.

At this point students should be presented with information about how the novel will be studied. (Appendix A, Handout #1 - Goals and Guidelines for Reading Great Expectations)

READING OF THE NOVEL

Read the first chapter out loud to the students. Practice first so you can give proper emphasis and intonations. Follow with discussion questions as given in Appendix B.

Give students Handout #2 - The First Stage. Assign chapters according to your own class reading ability as you see it. Give Handouts #3 and #4 as students progress. You might want to read a chapter aloud occasionally. Students do like to be read to, and it provides a bit of a break for them.

EVALUATION

Appendix C contains an objective test for each of the three stages and an essay test that can be used as an overall test for the novel. There are also five short quizes that can be used to check reading along the way.

COMPOSITION

The following is a list of composition ideas that can be used at various stages in the novel or after completing the entire book.

1. Write about a favorite character
2. Write about a favorite scene

3. Write about a subplot in the novel. Identify the people involved in the conflict of this subplot.
4. Compare and contrast two characters:
   Biddy and Estella
   Drummle and Joe
   Magwitch and Compeyson
5. Should Pip have been dissatisfied with his life? How can dissatisfaction lead to happiness or misery?
6. Choose a lesson to be learned from the novel and write about it (theme)
   - appearances and real happiness
   - revenge
   - different kinds of love (selfless and shelfish) Which does Dickens respect?
   - relationship between money and happiness

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following materials ~~were researched and~~ were found quite useful in the preparation of this unit. They are well worth reviewing for anyone preparing to teach Great Expectations.

Books

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Novelists and Their Times, Part 1. Sound filmstrip. Mt. Kisco, New York: Teaching Resources Films, 1976. 76 fr., 18 min.

Handout #1 Goals and Guidelines for Reading Great Expectations.

GOALS

1. To gain appreciation of Dickens's skill at creating realistic human characters.
2. To gain insight into the problems of a youth confused by false values and unreal ambitions and apply these problems to their own world.
3. To gain understanding of the social and historical background of nineteenth century Englahd and relation to the story.
4. To enjoy a well constructed plot and the mystery and surprise involved.

Pip's adventures are divided into three stages. Roughly one stage will be studied per week with a short test after each. Ample reading time will be given in class with discussion of each day's reading assignment. Since this is your book report requirement, you must give evidence in discussion, tests, etc., that you are reading or failure for the grading period could result.

In addition to the reading of the book each student will be required to complete a long term project. These should be done on a regular size poster board. They are to be done in color with borders and appropriate titles or captions. Do your best work as they will be displayed during our Evening of the Arts Program. Suggestions for topics are:

1. Draw or paint a character from the story. Accompany your portrait with an appropriate quotation from the novel.
2. Draw a scene from the novel.

3. Illustrate a theme from the novel.

4. Make a collage of magazine pictures showing your own "great expectations". Write a short composition telling how you will go about fulfilling them.

Vocabulary study will be done during this time with words from the novel. The words will be given to you with your study sheet for each stage. They will be included on your test for each stage.

A weekly writing assignment will be given to help you in understanding the characters, plot, and/or theme of the novel.

Keep up with the reading assignments so that you can follow and participate in class discussions. Nearly 1/2 of your grades this grading period will come from the study of Great Expectations so put forth your best effort!

Calendar for studying Great Expectations

(Insert dates for reading assignments, writing assignments, tests, and project due dates)

Handout #2 - The First Stage

Almost all stories are concerned with human character or human personality. An alert reader analyzes characters in a story. A reader should note the amount of change and growth in a character's personality. It is easier to tell this change if the story is a full length novel as in Great Expectations.

Note the character development of Pip and each character as you meet them in this story. Compare the character change with characters you remember from short stories you have read this year.

Try to find the points at which concern for self influenced the chief characters' actions. At what points did concern for another person or being influence the actions? Which of these two concerns is more common? Which is more adult?

Point of View

The point of view is the relationship of the story teller to a story. Great Expectations is a first person point of view which means we see everything through the eyes of the character who tells the story using "I". Pip is the I in this story and we gain interest in him and sympathy for him. As you read, note how Pip does this and be ready to discuss specific passages.

Plot and Conflict

Every story plot has a conflict, either external or internal. Longer novels such as this one may have more than one conflict. Look for the conflicts as you read.

Novels usually have subplots which are plots that are not as important as the main plot, but it is related to the main action in the story. The subplot also has a conflict. Look for the subplots of Great Expectations.

Outline of Action - First Stage

1. Pip has two meetings with a mysterious convict.
2. Christmas dinner turns out to be a comedy.
3. There is a fight between the two convicts on the marsh.
4. Pip's convict is arrested; he protects Pip.
5. Pip is summoned to Miss Havisham.
6. Miss Havisham and Estella treat Pip shabbily.
7. Pip has a visit from "A man with a file".
8. Miss Havisham has a birthday party.
9. Pip has a fight with a strange boy.
10. Pip becomes Joe's apprentice as a reward from Miss Havisham.
11. Pip's visits to Miss Havisham become excuses to see Estella; he is in love with her.
12. Mrs. Joe is attacked. There are clues to her assailant.
13. Pip confides to Biddy.
14. Mr. Jaggers announces Pip's "great expectations."
15. Pip says farewell to Miss Havisham and departs for London.

The following is a list of vocabulary words to study from the First Stage. Look up the definitions in the glossary of your literature book. The number in parens tells you the page number and section of the page on which you will find the word in the story.

1. consternation (546d)
2. apparition (550D)
3. farinaceous (558c)
4. rumination (565a)
5. expounded (567b)
6. rebuff (571b)
7. undermining (571c)
8. dexterity (573b)
9. mollified (577b)
10. magisterial (578a)
11. unwonted (582c)
12. strategum (585b)
13. imbrued (582c)
14. miscreant (590b)
15. circuitously (590d

Handout #3 - The Second Stage

Characterization

An author may use two methods to reveal a character's personality:

1. direct - clear statements from the author
2. indirect - revealed through characters' words and actions

There are four character behaviors

1. Flat characters reveal only one personality trait.
2. Round characters have many different personality traits.
3. Static characters remain unchanged throughout the story.
4. Dynamic characters chnage in the course of the story.

As more characters are introduced in the story, think about their behaviors and how they fit into these categories. Also decide if their personalities are revealed directly or indirectly.

Outline of Action - Second Stage

1. Pip arrives in London and meets his roommate, Herbert Pocket.
2. Herbert tells Pip some information about Miss Havisham and Estella.
3. Pip meets the following people: Matthew Pocket, his tutor; Drummle and Startop, fellow students; Wemmick, a law clerk and his father; Molly, Mr. Jaggers's housekeeper.
4. Joe visits Pip in London.
5. Pip returns home to visit Miss Havisham.
6. Pip knows he loves Estella despite her warnings.
7. Pip returns home to his sister's funeral.
8. Pip celebrates his 21st birthday.
9. Pip asks advice of Mr. Jaggers.
10. Estella flirts with Drummle.
11. Pip's benefactor is revealed to him.

Vocabulary words from the Second Stage

1. mottled (594a)

2. constraint (596d)

3. beguiled (601a)

4. egress (602a)

5. deterred (602d)

6. reticent (602d)

7. discrepancy (607d)

8. submission (608d)

9. reparation (608d)

10. fain (609c)

11. servile (611d)

12. descried (611d)

13. waive (614c)

14. confounded (616a)

15. conduced (616d)

Handout #4 - The Third Stage

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is the use of clues by the author to prepare readers for events that will happen later in the story. The clues help to increase interest and build suspense. Although surprise reappearance of characters and coincidences are part of reading Dickens's novels, foreshadowing must be used or the events will not be believable. As you finish the story, watch for the return of characters from Pip's past and some coincidences that appear.

Theme

An author writes to express a feeling or idea about life. This is called the theme which is stated in a general statement. As you finish reading decide what Dickens was trying to say about these topics:

appearances and happiness	revenge
kinds of love	relationship between money and happiness

Outline of action - Third Stage

1. Magwitch tells his story to Pip.
2. Estella has news for Pip.
3. A change occurs in Miss Havisham.
4. Pip learns he is being watched.
5. Pip and Herbert devise a plan.
6. Pip learns more about Molly.
7. Pip again visits Miss Havisham: an aplolgy and a tragedy result.
8. Pip discovers the truth about Estella.
9. Pip has a narrow escape with Jrs. Joe's murderer.

10. The plan to smuggle Magwitch out is spoiled. Pip confesses some truths to him.
11. Some disappointments arise for Pip.
12. Eleven years later . . .

Vocabulary words from the Third Stage

1. extricate (627a)
2. engendered (629a)
3. plied (631b)
4. conjectures (634a)
5. phosphoric (637c)
6. ascertain (651b)
7. magistrate (651d)
8. adjured (653c)
9. forfeiture (656b)
10. interposed (667c)

Discussion questions by chapter

Chapter 1: How is Pip able to visualize his father, mother, and brothers? What kinds of objects might you use to help yourself imagine a person if you had never seen the individual or a picture of him or her? How is the convict able to intimidate Pip? What does this reveal about the boy? Why is the marsh setting of the opening scene effective?

Chapter 2: Explain the relationships among Joe, Mrs. Joe, and Pip.

Chapter 3: Dickens draws a clear analogy between the way the convict eats and the way a dog eats. How is this helpful in emphasizing the plight of the convict?

Chapter 4: In what ways is Pip made to feel uncomfortable during the Christmas dinner? What can you conclude about the child-rearing practices of the time based on these incidents? How is suspense built around the discovery of the missing food?

Chapter 5: How does the sergeant play on Pumblechook's vanity? Can you recall examples from your own experience where flattery was used for a similar purpose? What are Joe's and Pip's attitudes toward the escaped convicts? Why do you think they have these attitudes? What do you think took place prior to the convicts' capture? What attitude do the two men have toward each other? Why does Pip's convict confess to stealing the food?

Chapter 6: How does Joe's background help to account for his attitude toward his wife and Pip? How do Joe's revelations regarding his background change Pip's attitude toward him?

Chapter 7: How is Satis House similar to Miss Havisham? What is Estella's reaction to Pip and his to her? How does Pip's experience affect his view of himself? Why do you think children feel injustice so sharply?

Chapter 8: How is Joe's wisdom contrasted with Pip's false pride and aspirations?

Why do we think Pip is reliable as a story teller? Name two scenes in which we have more sympathy for Pip because he is telling his own story. Explain.

Chapter 9: What conditions in the school prevent Pip from getting an education? How is it possible that Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt could continue to run her school in such a way? Why does the stranger at the Three Jolly Bargemen trouble Pip?

Chapter 10: What indication is there that Estella will play an important role in Pip's life? Why do Miss Havisham's relatives come to visit? Is there a difference between the stated reason and the real reason for their visit? What differences exist between the fighting skills the pale young man initially appears to have and those he actually displays?

Chapter 11: Why does Miss Havisham send for Joe? What is Mrs. Joe's reaction? How does she try to disguise her feelings? What indication is there that Pip is changing in his feelings toward Joe and toward his aspirations in life? How does Miss Havisham receive Pip's visit?

Chapter 12: Who is Orlick? Why is he upset at Pip's half-holiday? Why does Mrs. Joe become upset?

Chapter 13: In what way does Pip feel responsible for his sister's injuries? Why doesn't he reveal his secret about the convict? How is Mrs. Joe changed physically and mentally after the attack? In what ways is it a blessing? In what ways is it not? Explain the relationship between Biddy and Pip?

Chapter 14: Name two conditions attached to Pip's expectations. Why does Pip assume that Miss Havisham is responsible for his great expectations?

Chapter 15: Describe the behavior of Trabb and Mr. Pumblechook. Is this typical of the way people behave toward those with money?
What is the main conflict in the story? Are there any subplots?

Chapter 16: Who is Herbert? When did Pip meet him before? How is he related to Miss Havisham and Pip's tutor? In what ways is Mr. Jaggers's office a reflection of the man himself?

Chapter 17: How does Herbert impress Pip in his new quarters? What does he say of Miss Havisham's background? How might she have acted differently?

Chapter 18: Compare and contrast Drummle and Startop? In what ways is Walworth literally like a castle? In what ways is it symbolically a castle for Wemmick? Why is Pip comfortable there? Are physical surroundings the most important factor in determining one's feelings about a place?

Chapter 19: Why does Jaggers refer to Drummle as Spider? Why does the lawyer seem to take a fancy to him? How does Dickens arouse the reader's curiosity about Molly the housekeeper?

Chapter 20: In what subtle ways do Joe and Pip make each other uncomfortable? Is Joe wise to refuse Pip's invitation to return for dinner? Why or why not? Joe explains that he is at home at the forge. How is the forge a symbol of Joe's character?

Chapter 21: How does Pip continue to delude himself regarding Estella? How has Estella changed? How is she still the same? How do Pip's feelings toward her change? What warning does Estella give him about loving her?

Chapter 23: Which aspects of Mrs. Gargery's funeral seem inappropriate? Why does Biddy doubt that Pip will visit?

In what ways does Pip's behavior justify Biddy's opinion? What personality traits about these characters do we learn from Pip? : Joe (ch.20) Biddy (ch.23) Orlick (Ch.21) What do we learn about these characters from what he says or does?: Jaggers (ch.19) Estella (ch. 22) Wemmick (ch.18) How do details of description reveal the personality of: the Aged Parent (ch. 18) Drummle (ch. 18) Molly (ch. 19)

Chapter 24:What changes occur in Pip;s life when he comes of of age? In what ways is he disappointed? Why doesn't Pip accept Wemmick's advice given at the office? Is Pip totally unselfish in setting up Herbert in business?

Chapter 25: How is Pip's love for Estella ironic? Compare the story of Miss Havisham and Estella to the tale of King Midas and his daughter. Why does Estella show favortism toward Drummle?

Chapter 26: How does Pip first react to the returned convict? How does he respond upon learning that the convict was his benefactor? What does this reveal about Pip?

Chapter 27: Who might the lurker on the stair be? What was Magwitch's purpose in making Pip into a gentleman? How does Mr. Jaggers protect himself when Pip questions him? Why is it necessary for him to do this? How is Herbert able to talk Pip out of doing anything foolish?

Chapter 28: Discuss Magwitch's background. In what ways can his actions be traced to weaknesses in his character? To the circumstances of his environment? How does his background serve to tie together various threads of the plot?

Chapter 29: Why has Estella decided to marry Drummle?

Chapter 30: In what ways does Wemmick prove himself to be a true friend to Pip? Why is Mrs. Whimple's house chosen as a hideout for Magwitch?

Chapter 32: What first leads Pip to suspect that Molly is Estella's real mother?

Chapter 33: How do you account for Miss Havisham's sudden change of heart? Why does Pip return to Miss Havisham's room just in time to save her from the fire? Is Pip courageous in saving her?

Chapter 34: How does Herbert again reveal his kindness? Why won't Jaggers admit that Pip has discovered the secret of Estella's parentage? Why does Pip finally decide not to disclose his secrets?

How does Dickens use foreshadowing to prepare the reader for the return of Magwitch as Pip's benefactor? What other characters from Pip's youth have returned? What clues prepare us for these reappearances?

Chapter 35: Does Pip act wisely in deciding to travel to the sluice-house alone? What possibilities should he have taken into consideration? Why does Orlick hate Pip so? Why does Orlick prolong the murder of his long-time enemy?

Chapter 36: Why does Magwitch seem so unconcerned about the possibility of his capture? How is the capture of Magwitch similar to the capture of the two convicts at the beginning of the novel?

Chapter 37: Why doesn't Pip want Magwitch to know the truth about the money he plans to leave him? Why does Herbert leave his good friend Pip at such a trying time? How have Pip's feelings toward Magwitch now changed? What do these changes reveal about Pip's character? Was Magwitch foolish to return to England?

Chapters 38-39: What news does Joe give Pip about Miss Havisham in Chapter 38? About Orlick? What plans does Pip have when he returns to the forge? Why must he change his plans?

Chapter 40: In the original version of the novel, Dickens did not have Pip and Estella meet to renew their old relationship. Do you think this happy ending that he later substituted for the original is more satisfactory?

Explain how Pip's adventures contain different types of conflict: internal, person against person, person against society.

In what ways do the following round characters reveal more than one personality trait: Pip, Estella, Wemmick.

Why can Pip and Estella be considered dynamic characters? Explain if each of the characters is dynamic or static: Joe, Miss Havisham, Magwitch, and Jaggers.

How does the setting create atmosphere when Pip goes to Miss Havisham's. If you were to adapt the novel into a play but could have only three scence, which three settings would you choose as the most important? Why?

What changes does Pip see in his visit to Miss Havisham's at the end of the novel? What do the changes in the house tell us about changes in Miss Havisham, Estella, and Pip?

Since the novel is told in first person, we are told only what Pip knows. Certain incidents occurred in the past, and Pip must learn about such events from others. Name three characters who tell Pip about important events. What do we learn from each?

In what way might the new ending of the novel be different if the novel had an omniscient point of view?

Compare the characters in the pairs thinking about which one presents a better appearance, which is a happier, kinder person, and what Dickens is saying about appearances and real happiness. Biddie and Estella
Drummle and Joe
Magwitch and Compeyson

Find three characters in the novel who live to repay wrongs done to them in the past. What finally happens to each of them. What is Dickens saying about revenge?

Think about the two characters in the novel who are wealthy - Miss Havisham and Estella - and two who are poor - Biddy and Herbert. What is the relationship between each characters's happiness and the amount of money each character has?

What criticism of English schools does Dickens imply in his description of Pip's education. What criticism of English legal institutions does Dickens imply with the story of Magwitch?

Questions taken from:

Somers, Candles and Mirrors and Understanding Literature, Macmillan Literature Series

Check Test Chapters 1-8 True/False

1.Pip lives with his parents, Mrs. and Mrs. Joe Gargery.
2.The convict asks Pip to bring him a file and some food.
3. Pip is caught stealing the food and is punished for it.
4. Miss Havisham never leaves her house.
5. Estella thinks Pip is "common."

Check Test Chapters 9-15 True/False

1. Pip meets a man in the pub who stirs his drink with a file.
2. Pip is asked to take Miss Havisham for a walk in the garden.
3. Mrs. Joe is attacked with a tool from the forge.
4. Pip tells Biddy that he wants to become a gentleman.
5. Mr. Jaggers tells Pip that he now has "great expectations".

Check Test Chapters 16-23 True/False

1. The "pale young gentleman" who fought with Pip becomes Pip's roomate.
2. Pip and Joe enjoy Joe's visit to London.
3. Molly is Mr. Jaggers's wife.
4. Miss Havisham does not want Pip to visit Estella in London.
5. Pip returns to the forge to attend his sister's funeral.

Check Test Chapters 24-31 True/False

1. On Pip's twenty-first birthday Mr. Jaggers tells him who his benefactor is.
2. Magwitch is in danger of being hanged if he is discovered in London.
3. Compeyson was the man who swindled Miss Havisham.
4. Estella tells Pip that she will never marry.
5. Pip has evidence that Compeyson is following him.

Check Test Chapters 32-40 True/False

1. Magwitch is Estella's real father.
2. The man Pip finds waiting for him at the lime kiln on the marshes is Compeyson.
3. Herbert and Startop save Pip from death.
4. Magwitch dies when the boat capsizes.
5. Pip will be rich because Magwitch has left him his fortune.

Great Expectations - The First Stage

In the space to the left, place the letter of the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

_____1. Pip's ideas about what his parents were like were based on
A. entries from their diaries.
B. their photographs.
C. stories his sister told him.
D. their tombstone.

_____2. The first meeting between Pip and "his convict"
A. was frightening to Pip.
B. was friendly.
C. took place at Joe's shop.
D. occurred in a tavern.

_____3. When Pip took the food and the file to the convict he
A. felt no fear.
B. came upon the wrong convict first.
C. was badly injured.
D. got lost in the fog.

_____4. Pip felt certain that the soldiers who interrupted Christmas dinner had come to
A. arrest Mrs. Joe for cruelty.
B. arrest Joe.
C. eat.
D. arrest him.

_____5. Magwitch got Pip off the hook by saying that
A. he had never seen Pip before.
B. he had just escaped that morning.
C. he (Magwitch) had stolen the food and file.
D. none of the above.

_____6. Magwitch's lie to help Pip showed
A. stupidity.
B. compassion.
C. his self-destructive nature.
D. his love for prison.

_____7. Most of Pip's early education was done by
A. Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt.
B. Mrs. Joe.
C. Biddy.
D. Joe.

_____8. The school kept by Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt was
A. of little value.
B. excellent.
C. fairly worthwhile.
D. difficult to enroll in.

_____9. Pip started going to Miss Havisham's because of arrangements by
A. Joe.
B. Uncle Pumblechook.
C. Mrs. Joe.
D. Biddy.

_____10. Pip's purpose in going to Miss Havisham's was to
A. play. C. tend the garden.
B. do odd jobs. D. do general cleaning.

_____11. Pip's feelings were badly hurt when Estella called him
A. worthless. C. a common laboring boy.
B. a mere baby. D. disgusting.

_____12. Mrs. Joe was injured with
A. a knife. C. a gun.
B. a leg iron. D. a hammer.

_____13. Pip is first told of his "great expectations" by
A. Joe. C. Jaggers
B. Miss Havisham. D. Magwitch

_____14. A condition of Pip's great expectations was that Pip must
A. not ask the name of his benefactor.
B. change his name to that of his benefactor.
C. earn part of his living expenses.
D. live at the home of his guardian.

_____15. Before he left for London, Pip was convinced that
A. he would never see Estella again.
B. he would never see Miss Havisham again.
C. Estella would someday marry him.
D. Miss Havisham was his benefactor.

_____16. On leaving for London, Pip
A. boasted of his new fortunes.
B. felt he had been ungrateful.
C. thought only of his future.
D. sent a letter to Estella.

Place the letter of the BEST synonym in the blank.

_____17. farenaceous
A. mean B. mealy C. critical D. fat

_____18. rebuff
A. refusal B. relative C. recess D. shine

_____19. mollified
A. spotted with color B. ordered by law C. anger softened D. caused harm

_____20. unwonted
A. not wanted B. not common C. not warmed D. not experienced

_____21. strategum
A. clever plan B. foam C. harmful statement D. drumming sound

_____22. miscreant
A. grain B. accident C. criminal D. alien

_____23. circuitously
A. simply B. not directly C. traditionally D. unfeelingly

_____24. rumination
A. ruins B. trick C. showy language D. pondering

_____25. consternation
A. shock B. stubborness C. anger D. hate

Great Expectations - The Second Stage

In the space to the left, place the letter of the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

_____1. Pip shared lodgings in London with
A. Mr. Wemmick.
B. Mr. Jaggers.
C. Matthew Pocket.
D. the "pale young gentleman"

_____2. Pip's roommate called
A. Beethoven.
B. Handel.
C. Shakespeare.
D. Pirrip.

_____3. Pip's first lesson from his roommate was in
A. table manners.
B. dancing.
C. correct speech.
D. social introductions.

_____4. Pip learned that Miss Havisham lived a peculiar life because
A. she was mentally incompetent.
B. she had been jilted on her wedding day.
C. she had been cheated by her cousins.
D. her lover had been killed accidentally.

_____5. After beginning his studies Pip found recreation in
A. talking with Matthew Pocket.
B. going for long walks alone.
C. sightseeing in London.
D. rowing on the river.

_____6. Mr. Wemmick insisted on
A. displaying his wealth.
B. boasting of his kindness to his father.
C. separating his personal life from his business life.
D. not trusting Pip.

_____7. Mr. Jaggers called attention to his housekeeper Molly by referring to her
A. huge appetite.
B. physical strength.
C. great beauty.
D. shifty eyes.

_____8. Joe went to London in order to
A. deliver Miss Havisham's message.
B. tell Pip of Mrs. Joe's death.
C. embarrass Pip before his friends.
D. give Pip money.

_____9. When Joe was in London, Pip
A. urged him to stay longer.
B. introduced him to Drummle and Startop.
C. was ungracious to him.
D. found him a room nearby.

_____10. On the way to his home town, Pip saw
A. Estella.
B. Uncle Pumblechook.
C. his convict.
D. the man he had seen at the Three Jolly Bargemen

_____11. After leaving Joe's employ, Orlick
A. went to see Mr. Jaggers.
B. worked at the Three Jolly Bargemen.
C. became Miss Havisham's porter.
D. could not find a job.

_____12. In London, Pip
A. went into debt.
B. lived within his budget.
C. borrowed money from Herbert.
D. appealed to his guardian for funds.

_____13. Just before her death Pip's sister
A. blessed Pip.
B. spoke Joe's name.
C. showed anger toward Biddy.
D. indicated she was in great pain.

_____14. Pip used part of his birthday allowance to
A. set Herbert up in business
B. pay off Joe's debts.
C. repay Miss Havisham.
D. buy a tombstone for his sister's grave.

_____15. Pip's benefactor lived in fear of
A. being blackmailed by Orlick.
B. meeting a certain former convict.
C. going bankrupt because Pip was spending so heavily.
D. being betrayed by Mr. Jaggers.

_____16. When he discovered the identity of his benefactor, Pip realized that
A. he might be arrested for hiding a criminal.
B. money was not everything in life.
C. Miss Havisham did not intend Estella for him.
D. Mr. Jaggers had made a fool of him.

Place the letter of the BEST synonym in the blank.

_____17. mottled
A. thought clearly
B. confused
C. combined
D. spotted or streaked with color

_____18. beguiled
A. confused
B. passed pleasantly
C. falttered
D. approached

_____19. egress
A. exit
B. wall
C. lack of basic necessities
D. sharp point

_____20. reticent
A. reluctant to speak
B. hesitant
C. talking too much
D. tired

_____21. discrepancy
A. uneasy feeling
B. difference
C. dislike
D. discolor

_____22. reparation
A. uneasy feeling
B. ready for something
C. making up for something
D. decision

_____23. descried
A. admitted
B. caught sight of
C. refused
D. persuaded

_____24. confounded
A. endangered
B. mixed together
C. confused
D. made up of many parts

_____25. conduced
A. lead to
B. met
C. hit
D. confused

Great Expectations - The Third Stage

In the space to the left, place the letter of the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

_____1. Pip told the watchman and his servants that his guest was
A. a visitor from his home town.
B. his uncle.
C. a man hiding from the police.
D. a friend of Herbert Pocket.

_____2. The convict staying with Pip had assumed the name of
A. Provis.
B. Magwitch.
C. Pirrip.
D. Wemmick.

_____3. Compeyson was
A. the watchman at Pip's lodgings.
B. the man with whom Pip's convict fought on the marshes.
C. Miss Havisham's brother.
D. the judge who had sentenced Pip's convict.

_____4. Mr. Wemmick told Pip that Molly
A. was a distant relative of Mr. Jaggers.
B. had once been acquitted in a murder trial.
C. had no living relatives.
D. planned to leave Mr. Jaggers's employ.

_____5. The last time Pip visited Miss Havisham, she
A. told him he could marry Estella.
B. fell on her knees before him.
C. asked to see Herbert Pocket.
D. cursed all men.

_____6. Pip became certain that Estella was the daughter of
A. Compeyson.
B. Provis.
C. Arthur.
D. Orlick.

_____7. Pip nearly lost his life when he
A. was attacked at the Blue Boar.
B. met Orlick in the sluice house.
C. struggled with Drummle.
D. fought with Startop.

_____8. Pip's convict was injured when he
A. struggled with his enemy under water.
B. fell down the stairs.
C. was shot by a policeman.
D. ran out into the street.

_____9. Pip was rescued by
A. Joe, Orlick, and Trabb.
B. Wemmick, Jaggers, and Joe.
C. Herbert, Mr. Pocket, and Joe
D. Herbert, Startop, and Trabb' boy.

_____10. During Pip's illness, his best friend was
A. Herbert. C. Mr. Wemmick.
B. Joe. D. Uncle Pumblechook.

_____11. Pip's attitude toward his convict became more
A. unkind. C. indifferent.
B. unselfish. D. strict.

_____12. At the end of the novel, Biddy was
A. engaged to Pip. C. married to Joe.
B. Estella's maid. D. teaching school.

_____13. After Miss Havisham's death, Pip saw Estella
A. never again. C. a year or two later.
B. often. D. eleven years later.

_____14. Orlick finally was imprisoned because of
A. an attack on Pip. C. his murder of Mrs. Joe.
B. robbery. D. threats toward Joe.

_____15. "Little Pip" was the child of
A. Herbert. C. Estella.
B. Joe. D. Pip.

_____16. Dickens's two endings to the novel differ mainly as to
A. Estella's future. C. Orlick's fate.
B. Pip's occupation. D. Joe's home life.

Place the letter of the BEST synonym in the blank.

_____17. extricate
A. remove C. speed up
B. torment D. to make lively

_____18. engendered
A. caused harm C. caused to want
B. caused to grow D. caused pain

_____19. conjecture
A. a plan C. an agreement
B. a guess D. an open declaration

_____20. phosphoric
A. shining C. flexible
B. poisonous D. shut-up

_____21. ascertain
A. to harm C. to find out
B. to listen D. to cause pain

_____22. magistrate
A. country cousin C. poor financial situation
B. heaviness D. local judge

_____23. adjured
A. planned carefully
B. ordered solemnly
C. asked seriously
D. stated humorously

_____24. forfeiture
A. illegal activity
B. act of giving up
C. unruly behavior
D. basic nature

_____25. interposed
A. to suggest
B. to speak of
C. to come between
D. to hand loosely

Great Expectations - Final Exam

Answer the following questions completely and specifically using complete sentences.

1. Who is the author of Great Expectations? Tell something about his life and the influence it had upon the novel he wrote. (10 points)

2. Compare the Pip in Chapter 1 with the one who leaves for England. (10 points)

3. Which three people influenced Pip the most? Explain how each of them changed Pip - for better or worse. (15 points)

4. Explain the relationship between: (15 points)
   A. Magwitch and Compeyson
   B. Magwitch and Molly
   C. Magwitch and Molly (as one) and Estella.

5. Explain Miss Havisham's death and what change occurred in her before she died. (10 points)

6. In growing up, Pip learns many things about life and people. Tell what you think are the most important things he learns and why you think they are important. (20 points)

7. How has Estella changed in each of the two endings of the story? (10 points)

8. In what ways is Great Expectations realistic to you, the modern reader, and in what ways is it difficult to accept? (10 points)